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Wednesday, August 12, 2009

The Hammonton Gazette

"The Paper of Record"

Volume 13 • Issue 32

www.hammontongazette.com

Former Sweetwater owner writes memoir

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HAMMONTON—Local and regional residents who remember Alesia Shute from her role as one of the owners of the Sweetwater Casino in Mullica Township will be intrigued to learn about her life – including her fight to survive childhood cancer – in Shute's new book *Everything's Okay*.

All profits from the book are being donated by Shute to the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. When Shute was initially diagnosed with cancer at the age of seven, she went to Children's Hospital and one of her surgeons was former United States Surgeon General Dr. C. Everett Koop. She credits both Koop and Dr. John Templeton with saving her life.

Last week, Shute was in Hammonton for a well-attended book signing at Rocco's Town House. During an interview with *The Gazette* on August 5, she said the book had been in the planning stages for some time.

"I've been thinking about writing a book for as long as I can remember," Shute said.

After she and her husband Cliff sold their businesses in New Jersey, there was more time to work on the book.

"I was just sitting around the house after we sold Sweetwater, and I never 'not

complete a project. I never let anything hang in the wind. I like to finish what I start. So I started typing," Shute said.

After two years of work and one year of fine-tuning, the book was ready to be published, Shute said.

The book is a true memoir, a story of a life that includes settings from Philadelphia to Atlantic City to Sweetwater. It is a highly personal account of dealing with cancer at a young age, overcoming the disease and living life on one's own terms.

"I start as far back as I can remember, which is about age seven, when I first got sick. Then I take the reader through how the cancer affected me, my family and my friends. Then I write about going through marriage, childbirth and surgery after surgery," Shute said.

In addition to her story of surviving pediatric cancer, the book includes many moments of laughter, sorrow and situations unique to Shute's life – especially during her years as a partner in nightclub ownership. Readers will not forget the moment when a man literally falls out of the ceiling at a club.

Everything's Okay sells for \$17.95 and is 161 pages. The book is available at book signings, or online at www.everythingsokaybook.com or www.amazon.com.

Shute said the reaction to the book has



THG/Gabe Donio

Former Sweetwater Casino owner Alesia Shute held a booksigning on August 5 at Rocco's Town House.

been "positive and exciting."

"The feedback has been great. It's an

easy read, emotional, funny. And you

walk away with something," Shute said.

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